

Last Minute Memorandum

To: STATE BOARD MEMBERS

Date: July 10, 2003

From: Sue Stickel, Deputy Superintendent
Curriculum and Instruction Branch

Re: ITEM # 23

Subject: Criteria for the Selection of 2003-2004 School Assistance and Intervention Team (SAIT) Providers.

Enclosed is the most recent version of the School Assistance and Intervention Team (SAIT) criteria, which includes several additional elements. Since this item was discussed at the June State Board meeting, we have met with the State Board liaisons and worked with a number of interested groups. As a result, we have made several changes to the assurances required and criteria to be approved as a SAIT Provider.

As noted in the June item, SAIT providers must apply to review a particular grade span or grade spans and assure expertise in the subject matter and instructional programs in use at the school. In addition, they must be prepared to deliver a multi-layered SAIT, given the differential initial status and academic progress of these schools. Providers must also agree to have the preliminary recommended corrective actions report reviewed by CDE for legality, prior to adoption by the local governing board.

Explicit changes in the criteria include the addition of knowledge of frameworks and State Board-adopted reading intervention programs, and the ability to provide ~~or broker~~ *the intensive* support necessary for the school to successfully implement the recommendations made by the SAIT. Finally, in the professional development criterion, we added “standards-aligned” to accommodate high schools, which do not have State Board-adopted instructional materials.

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Most Recent Version of SAIT Criteria

The California Department of Education (CDE) is requesting that the prior criteria for the selection of Approved School Assistance and Intervention Team (SAIT) Providers be used, with several additional requirements. These new requirements assure that SAIT Providers *shall*:

- Apply to review a particular grade span or grade spans
- Have expertise in the subject matter and instructional programs in use at the school
- Are prepared to deliver a multi-layered SAIT, depending on the school's needs
- Agree to have the preliminary recommended corrective actions report reviewed by CDE for legality.

In addition, ~~an explicit criterion has been added that~~ the prospective SAIT organizations *shall* provide evidence of the ability to provide ~~or broker~~ *the intensive* support necessary for the school to successfully implement recommendations made by the SAIT.

These ~~additional~~ elements are based on the recognition of the complex problems that are encountered in underperforming schools. Most of these schools lack one or more of the following components essential to school success:

- Coherent and focused academic policies and organization for supporting a comprehensive, standards-aligned academic program based upon State Board-adopted or aligned instructional materials
- District and site leadership to support a comprehensive standards-aligned academic program
- Full academic standards-aligned programs and materials in every classroom and appropriate interventions available
- Use of student assessment data to systematically improve and inform instruction and achievement
- Agreements about the implementation, pacing, and monitoring of academic instruction
- Ongoing content-specific professional development opportunities aligned to the specific instructional materials in use at the school (e.g., approved AB 466 professional development or AB 75 principal training).

The above components for standards-based educational programs need to be implemented in these schools to ensure that students have the opportunity to achieve proficiency in California's academic standards. Given the initial status and differential progress that these schools are making, it is recognized that different levels of intervention may be necessary to assist these low-performing schools and help them to implement the essential components listed above.

Prospective SAIT Providers will be required to submit an application to review a particular grade span or grade spans (e.g., elementary, middle, secondary) in a SAIT-assigned school. Providers must have knowledge and expertise in the instructional and subject matter programs to be reviewed at the school, as well as experience as a content expert, coach, or coordinator of experts or coaches. For K-8 SAIT Providers, assurance must be provided that the team

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will have a high degree of knowledge and skill in the K-8 instructional programs in mathematics and reading/language arts that are in use at any of these low-performing elementary or middle schools that the SAIT reviews. For 9-12 Providers, assurance must be given that the team has a high degree of knowledge in ~~State Board- standards-aligned~~ English/language arts and mathematics ~~curricula, including State Board-adopted~~ *reading/language arts instructional materials, including the State Board-adopted reading/language arts interventions*. For all K-12 Providers, assurance must be given that a minimum of one team member must have school and/or district administrative experience in the grade span in which the team will be working.

Prospective SAIT Providers must demonstrate recent success in working with low-performing schools. ~~and have recent successful expertise in each of the areas listed below.~~ The specific areas in which expertise ~~is to~~ *must* be demonstrated are:

- Knowledge of State Board-adopted academic content standards and frameworks
- The teaching of standards-based reading, writing, language arts, and mathematics for students by grade span
- Knowledge and use of universal access materials and other strategies to help English Learners acquire full academic proficiency in English and meet grade-level standards in the context of state statutory requirements
- Knowledge and use of Student Testing and Reporting (STAR) assessments, as well as curriculum-imbedded assessments, standardized, criterion-referenced and other forms of assessment and their use to guide school planning
- Accelerated interventions for underperforming students and schools, including the State Board-adopted reading intervention programs
- ~~Evaluation and research-based reform strategies~~
- Professional development that addresses standards-based instruction focused on State Board-adopted or aligned instructional materials that are in use at the school
- *Ability to provide ~~or broker~~ the intensive support necessary for the school to successfully implement recommendations made by the SAIT*

In addition, it is suggested that team members have knowledge and skills in the following areas:

- *Maximizing* human and fiscal resources to accelerate the academic achievement of underperforming students
- *Evaluation and research-based reform strategies*
- Classroom management and discipline
- Effective school management and leadership for “turning around” underperforming schools
- Effective communication with parents, students, teachers, staff, and administrators in underperforming schools
- ~~Ability to provide the intensive the support necessary for the school to successfully implement recommendations made by the SAIT~~
- Oral and written communication skills.